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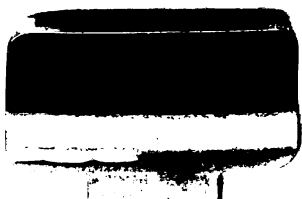
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Publius Vergilius Maro

Virgil's Prophecy

on

The Saviour's Birth

The Fourth Eclogue

Edited and translated by

Paul Carus

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THE CHRIST-IDEAL AND THE GOLDEN AGE.

VIRGIL'S Fourth Eclogue has been considered by many Christians as a prophecy of the advent of Christ, and certainly it might as well be so understood as many of the passages in the Old Testament which are quoted in Matthew. It is true that the child to whom this poem was addressed, whosoever he may have been, did not fulfil the expectations in the sense in which they were meant, but the same is also true of the Old Testament prophecies. In the sense in which they were meant they have never been fulfilled. The Christian interpretation has been superimposed and does violence to the meaning of the passages quoted. This method of inter-

pretation was deemed legitimate in those days and we follow the same method to-day when we see the past in the light of the present that has developed from it. In this sense we speak of the leaders of progress as having "builded better than they knew."

Virgil's Eclogue is remarkable in showing how widespread was the idea of a saviour who should come to bring peace on earth and restore the golden age. Oracles to that purpose were afloat, and Virgil himself refers to verses of the Cumaean Sybil whose dicta were considered as a divine revelation even among Christians.

The civil wars, with their disturbance of commerce and much unnecessary bloodshed had caused great unrest. The world was longing for the strong hand of a just ruler with whom the Golden Age of Saturn would return. Astraea, the maid of the stars, the celestial virgin who had been living among men on earth in the times of primitive innocence but had withdrawn to the heavens where she

became visible as the constellation of Virgo, will descend to earth, and with her a general era of goodwill and patriarchal virtue will be restored.

From Conington's edition of Virgil we quote the following note:

"The original Sibylline books having been destroyed in the burning of the Capitol in Sulla's time, the senate ordered a collection of Sibylline verses to be made in the various towns of Italy and Greece. After a critical examination about a thousand lines were retained as genuine, and preserved with the same formality as the lost volumes. Varro however tells us (Dionys. Halic. Antiq. R. 4. 62) that some spurious ones were introduced, which might be detected by their acrostic character; and this test was employed by Cicero (De Div. 2. 54) to disprove a professedly Sibylline prediction brought forward by those who wished to make Cæsar king. Later we find that forgeries of the kind had become common, private persons

pretending to have oracles in their possession, and the matter was accordingly twice publicly investigated under Augustus (Suet. Aug. 31), and under Tiberius (Tac. A. 6. 12). Of the precise oracle to which Virgil refers nothing seems to be known."

The Sibylline books which are still extant are of a later origin. Out of the innumerable oracles fabricated in the different countries and corners of the world those only survived which found sufficient endorsement to induce scribes to copy and recopy them, and so it was a matter of course that with the spread of Christianity the Christian oracles, or at least those which appealed to Christian sentiments, had the best chance of survival. But Virgil's Fourth Eclogue which is pre-Christian proves that the hopes of Christians and pagans had many ideals in common, and such were the return of the golden age, i. e., the coming of the kingdom of God and the advent of a Saviour.

Our poem can be definitely dated; it is dedicated to Pollio and expressly refers to the year of his consulate in the words *te consule*.

Pollio was one of the great influential men at the time of the civil wars and had been Virgil's patron and friend. At the time of his consulate in 40 B. C. the political situation was greatly improved, for it seemed that at last peace would be established. We may infer from the poem itself that a child either was expected or had actually just been born in the family of Pollio during the same year, but it is impossible to make any further definite statement. Prof. John Conington in his English edition of Virgil's works thus sums up the historical question so far as its details can be ascertained (p. 505):

"The date is fixed to the year 714, when Pollio was consul and assisted in negotiating the peace of Brundisium. The hero of the poem is a child born, or to be born, in this auspicious year, who is gradually to perfect the restora-

tion then beginning. It is difficult to say who the child was, for the simple reason that Virgil's anticipations were never fulfilled. It is not certain that the child was ever born: it is certain that, if born, he did not become the regenerator of his time. On the other hand, there is considerable scope for conjecturing who he may have been. Pollio himself had two sons born about this period: the treaty was solemnized by the marriage of Antonius with Octavia, and the union of Octavianus with Scribonia had taken place not long before. The most ancient commentators, if we may judge by the notes in Macrobius (S. 3. 7. 1.) Servius, and the Berne scholia, were not agreed whether the poem was to be referred to Octavianus, or to one or other of Pollio's sons. One of these, called Saloninus, from his father's capture of Salona in Dalmatia, died in his infancy, while the other, C. Asinius Gallus, who is said to have spoken of himself to Asconius Pedianus as the person meant, lived to be discussed

by Augustus as his possible successor (Tac. A. 1. 13), and finally fell a victim to the jealousy of Tiberius (*ib.* 6. 23). Octavianus's marriage issued in the birth of Julia: Octavia's child, if it was ever born, was the child not of Antonius, but of Marcellus, her former husband, by whom she was pregnant at the time of her second marriage. Any of these births, so far as we can see, may have appeared at the time to a courtly or enthusiastic poet a sufficient center round which to group the hopes already assumed to be rising in men's minds, and though the next three years may have made a difference in this respect, the poem would still continue to be in its general features the embodiment of a feeling not yet extinguished, and as such might well be published along with the other Eclogues. The peace of Brundisium itself was not so much the cause of this enthusiasm as the occasion of its manifestation—the partial satisfaction of a yearning which had long been

felt, not merely the transient awakening of desires hitherto dormant.

"How far such hopes may have been connected with the expectation of a Messiah opens a wide question. The coincidence between Virgil's language and that of the Old Testament prophets is sufficiently striking: but it may be doubted whether Virgil uses any image to which a classical parallel cannot be found."

The reader will observe that at the end of the poem Virgil expresses his desire to live to sing the glory of his hero, and the same sentiment prevails in the words of Simeon:

"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

"For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

"Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

"A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

It is interesting to notice this parallelism with the Simeon story of the Gospel, and the parallelism is even stronger between the Christian and Buddhist stories. The Buddha child is greeted by the *rishi* Asita, as Christ by Simeon, and Asita sheds tears because at his advanced age his death is too near at hand to allow him to see with his own eyes the coming of the Lord's glory.

We have quoted for the information of the reader all that can be known about the child whom Virgil addresses in his poem, although nothing can be more indifferent to us at the present time, because the prophecy has not been fulfilled as it was meant. The main interest of this Eclogue consists not in the political situation of Rome in the year 714 *ab urbe condita* (40 B. C.) but in the expectation of a saviour among the people of the Roman Empire. To be sure the ideal of Virgil is not a suffering Jesus who dies on the cross for the sins of mankind, but a valiant god-incarnation after the prototype of such heroes

as Heracles, Theseus, Jason, Perseus, etc., and it is true, as Professor Conington says, that Virgil "uses no image to which a classical parallel cannot be found."

How general these ideas of a saviour of mankind were in the days of Augustus may also be seen from the writings of Seneca who has actually been claimed for a Christian, and a plausible case has been made out to assume that he must have been a personal friend of St. Paul.

Tertullian speaks of Seneca as "often our own" (*saepe noster*) while Lactantius looks upon him as a pagan who might have become a Christian. "If some one had instructed him," Lactantius said, "he would surely have held Zeno and his teacher Sotion in contempt."

This state of things appealed powerfully to the poetic imagination of the age and gave rise to the fabrication of a correspondence between Seneca and St. Paul. St. Augustine and St. Jerome mention letters of Seneca addressed to

St. Paul, and Jerome does not hesitate to count Seneca among the saints.

The idea expanded in course of time. A legend of the end of the fourth century that is ascribed to a certain Linus, and narrates the "Passion of Peter and Paul," mentions details of a secret intercourse between Paul and Seneca. Although the latter is not mentioned by name, his personality is plainly indicated by being called the tutor of the emperor (*institutor imperatoris* and *quidam magister Cæsaris*).

The letters of Seneca to St. Paul which were known to Jerome and Augustine seem to be hopelessly lost, but the subject was too tempting for writers of pious fiction not to take it up again, and in the beginning of the Middle Ages, presumably in the time of the Merovingians, another attempt was made to offer to the Christian world a correspondence between St. Paul and Seneca, but the crudeness of the style at once betrays the late date of the forgery. It consists of fourteen letters which

have been incorporated by Hase as an Appendix to his edition of Seneca, and were edited by Kraus and Westerborg in a separate and critical text edition.

Seneca continued to be regarded as a Christian during the Middle Ages; the Synod of Tours, for instance, cites him like a Church Father as a Christian authority. Not until the days of the Reformation was Seneca reclaimed for paganism by Erasmus and the humanists. Even to-day the idea is still upheld that Seneca was secretly a Christian, and the statement has been made that evidences were not forthcoming only because the philosopher did not dare to speak out boldly.¹ Xaver Kraus, however, calls attention to the fact that if Seneca had been a Christian he would have given some expression of his faith at least in the last moments before his death.

If Seneca had been a Christian he

¹ So e. g., Johannes Kreyher in his *L. Annaeus Seneca und seine Beziehung zum Urchristentum*. Cf. also *Lucius Annaeus Seneca und das Christentum* by Michael Baumgarten.

would not have used pagan terminology, he would not have spoken of Jupiter when he meant God, nor of Hercules when he meant the Saviour. He says of Hercules, for instance, (*De Benef.* I, 14):

“Hercules never gained victories for himself. He wandered through the circle of the earth, not as a conqueror, but as a protector. What, indeed, should the enemy of the wicked, the defender of the good, the peacebringer, conquer for himself on land or sea!”

Such ideas of a god-man were common among pagans, as may be seen from Epictetus who insists on the divine sonship of Heracles saying (*III*, 24):

“He knew that no man is an orphan, but that there is a father always and constantly for all of them. He had not only heard the words that Zeus was the father of men, but he regarded him as his own father and called him such; and looking up to him he did what Zeus

did. Therefore he could live happily everywhere."

With the same reasons and the same arguments that would make Seneca a Christian we can claim not only Epic-tetus but also Marcus Aurelius and even Socrates, Plato and other pre-Christian philosophers. The fact is that the underlying philosophy of Christianity, or rather of the new religion that was to appear, gradually assumed a more and more definite shape.

Seneca was no more a Christian than Virgil, but this much is true that both were imbued with the spirit of the age in which a universal religion such as Christianity was preparing itself; and one tenet of this religion was the ideal of a God-man, a mediator between God and mankind, a Saviour who would come to bring peace on earth and establish a kingdom of righteousness.

Seneca embodies the matured philosophical spirit of his age which appears so Christian to Christians, and Virgil

exhibits a Messianic hope which, though couched in pagan terms, is quite Christian in sentiment. Nor are these authors exceptions, for we find the same ideas at that time prevailing everywhere in the Roman Empire. As further evidence we will quote passages from some public documents which date back to the time of Augustus celebrating him as the source of universal welfare, the Saviour of mankind, as a god with whose birthday a new era commences, which brings us the Gospel (the *evangelion*), consisting in peace on earth and a universal goodwill among men. The very words are either the same as those used in the Christian Gospels or quite similar, sometimes even stronger.

The documents to which we refer are inscriptions (recently discovered in several cities of Asia Minor) of which those of Priene, Halicarnassus, Apameia and Eumeneia are best preserved and have received most attention. They proclaim the introduction of the Julian calendar reform, which among other things or-

dains that the birthday of Augustus (September 23) shall be celebrated as the New Year's festival.²

We quote the following remarkable passage from the inscriptions of Priene:

"Since Providence³ which ordains all things in our life, has restored enterprise and love of honor, it has accomplished for [our] life the most perfect thing by producing the August One, whom it has filled with virtue for the welfare of the people; having sent him to us and ours as a Saviour,⁴ who should stop war and ordain all things. Having appeared, however, the Cæsar⁵ has fulfilled the hope of prophecies, since he

² For details see the essay by Mommsen and Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, entitled "Die Einführung des asiatischen Kalenders," published in *Mittheilungen des kaiserl. deutschen arch. Instituts, Athen*, Abh. 1899, Vol. XXIV, p. 275 ff.

³ πρόνοια.

⁴ Σωτήρ, the same word that is applied to Jesus as a synonym of Christ.

⁵ ὁ Καῖσαρ. The name of Cæsar has here become a title.

has not only outdone the benefactors who had come before him, but also has not left to future ones the hope of doing better; the birthday of this God has become through him a beginning of the good tidings."⁶

The word "Augustus" is originally a title, not a name. It reads in Greek *Sebastos*⁷ which means "venerable, majestic, worshipful," and might be translated either "Your Majesty," or "Your Holiness." It applies not only to political but also to religious authority.

The phrase "welfare of the people" reads in Greek *euergesia*⁸ which means "well doing, or well working," rendered in the dictionary "good service, a good deed, kindness, bounty, benefit." This word is similar to the Gospel term translated "good-will" in our Bible.⁹ But the

⁶ In Greek *εὐαγγέλιον*, the same term which is used in the New Testament, meaning "gospel" or "evangel."

⁷ τὸν Σεβαστόν.

⁸ εὐεργεσία.

⁹ εὐδοξία.

former is stronger than the latter; the latter denotes "well-meaning" while the former means "well-doing." A similar expression is that which proclaims Augustus as the source of universal welfare,¹⁰ the last word of which belongs to that group of auspicious designations beginning with the particle *eu*, meaning "well," but it has no parallel in our Gospel language. It might briefly be translated "bliss."

The inscription of Halicarnassus contains the same ideas expressed in other words. We quote from it the following sentences:

"Since the eternal and immortal nature of the All has in grace¹¹ given to men the greatest good in addition to excellent bounties, having brought forth Cæsar, the August One, for our happiness,—a father of his own country, the divine Roma, and a fatherly Zeus and Saviour of the whole race of men, for

¹⁰ τὸ κοινὸν πάντων εὐτύχημα.

¹¹ ἐχαρίσαστο, derived from χάρις, which means "grace."

which Providence has not only fulfilled but even outdone the prayers of all. For pacified is the earth and the sea; the cities flourish, there is love of order, concord, good fellowship, prosperity and abundance of everything good. With useful hopes for the future, and good feeling toward the present, mankind is filled."

The good tidings that the golden age had returned under the government of a divine man who ruled the world from its capital, Rome, spread beyond the confines of the Roman Empire and reached Parthia where, as we know, Ahura Mazda, the Lord Omniscient, was worshiped. The Parthians were Mithraists; they believed that God would send a divine mediator called Mithras who would be born from a pure virgin and establish the kingdom of righteousness on earth. He would sit in judgment to separate the good and the bad. The dead would rise from their graves with spiritual bodies that would throw

no shadow, and the living would be transfigured. Then peace would reign forever and all misery would be abolished.

We learn from Pliny the Elder (23-79 A. D.) of a visit which Tiridates, King of Parthia, paid to Nero. Having heard that the prosperity of the Roman Empire was due to the appearance of a divine incarnation, an august personality, who reigned under the name and title of Cæsar, he left his home and proceeded to Italy for the sake of worshiping this great god-man and surrendering to him the kingdom of Parthia.

The report preserved by Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* XXX, 16) reads as follows:

“Tiridates the magus had come to him [the emperor].... He had taken with him Magi and had him initiated into the magic meal [viz., the Mithraistic Lord’s Supper]. Yet while he gave back to him his kingdom, he [the emperor] could not receive from him his art.”

We know through Justin Martyr that

the Mithraists celebrated a sacrament, which to all appearance was the same as the Lord's Supper of the Christians, and on one of the Mithraic monuments we see an altar on which are placed the eucharist cup and the holy wafers bearing a cross. Justin refers to the Mithraic sacrament as well known to his readers and expressly speaks of the ceremony as "the same" as that of the Christians, only he claims that evil spirits had here as in so many other instances imitated the divine institutions of Christianity. We learn from the Avesta that the sacred cakes and the hallowed cup were taken for the sake of nourishing the resurrection body, and we must assume that Tiridates, wishing the Roman Emperor to take part in the blessings of his religion, celebrated the sacrament with him.

Tiridates did not know Nero, and the Romans seemed to think that the Mithraic sacrament conveyed some magic power on those who partook of it. We can imagine that both parties were mis-

taken in each other. How little did Tiridates know Nero, and Pliny informs us that the ceremony of the magic meal brought no special benefit to the Emperor.

Dion Cassius mentions the same incident in Nero's life, but he expressly states that Tiridates came because he recognized Mithras in the Roman Emperor. When he appeared before the Emperor, Dion Cassius reports that he addressed him with the words: "I came to thee, as to my God, in order to worship thee as the Mithras."¹²

There is no cogent reason to assume that the story of the magi as told in the Gospel according to Luke, was invented in imitation of the visit of Tiridates to Nero, although the similarity of the two reports is remarkable; and it is, to say the least, a very strange coincidence that Tiridates returned home by another way than the one by which he had come,¹³

¹² ἦλθον τε πρὸς σὲ τὸν ἐμὸν θεὸν, προσκυνήσων σε, ὡς καὶ τὸν Μίθραν. XLIII, 5.

¹³ οὐχ ἥπερ ἦλθε, i. e., not the one on which he came.

just as the magi did after they had worshiped the Christ child.

If we but bear in mind that the followers of Zoroaster expected a saviour (*saoshyant*) we can easily understand that the Christian Gospel writer was anxious to point out that their expectation was fulfilled in Jesus and that this fact had been recognized by the magi who had seen his star at the time of his birth. The Arabic Gospel of the Infancy even states that Zoroaster had foretold the birth of Christ,¹⁴ and Prof. Lawrence H. Mills has translated a "Hymn of Zarathushtra" which is the Prophet's "greeting to an expected champion."

And what do all these facts prove? Virgil's hymn hailing the return of the golden age, Seneca's pagan philosophy permeated with Christian sentiments, and in the beginning of the Christian era, the general expectation of a Saviour who would establish peace and goodwill;—all these things prove that a new

¹⁴ Chapter vii: "As Zerdusht had predicted."

religion was preparing itself in whose center would stand the figure of the God-man, the Saviour, the Lord, who is the vicegerent of God on earth. The Christ idea is older than the story of Jesus, and the latter was edited and re-edited until it incorporated all the features of the former and so met the requirements of the age. In St. Paul's day there was still a teacher who "was instructed in the way of the Lord," i. e., the Saviour, or the Christ, or rather the Christ-ideal. We read of Apollos that "being fervent in the spirit he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John"—which means that he knew nothing of Jesus. This man was an Alexandrian Jew who was converted by Aquila and Priscilla to the Christianity of Paul which taught that Jesus was the Christ.

The passage in Acts xviii. 25 proves that the Saviour idea, the term "Christ," and even definite doctrines concerning Christ are pre-Christian; they existed before Jesus was born. We must assume

that Paul too had taught a definite doctrine about the Christ before his conversion; and his views may have been very much like those of Apollos. Paul's conversion consisted simply in the idea which came upon him like a flash of lightning, that all his conceptions of Christ could be applied to Jesus, that the majesty of his divine nature was well set forth in his deepest humiliation, his death on the cross, "wherefore God hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name" (Phil. ii. 5-11).

There are many parallels between the different religions, why should there not be remarkable similarities between the stories and doctrines of those religions which believe in a Saviour? Nothing seems more natural, and we should expect it to be so. Nevertheless some of these similarities are astounding and we are at a loss how to explain their coincidences. For instance Virgil's Fourth Eclogue exhibits one most peculiarly detailed parallelism to Buddhist tradi-

tion which we will state here without attempting to explain it; all we can say is that we have no reason whatever to insist upon believing in any historical connection. Virgil expressly refers, near the end of his poem, to the time of the divine babe's gestation as ten months, which statement should be compared with the birth story of the Buddha which in Mr. Henry Clarke Warren's translation¹⁵ reads thus: "Now other women sometimes fall short of and sometimes run over the term of ten lunar months....but not so the mother of a future Buddha. She carries the future Buddha in her womb for just ten months."

Christianity is a great historic movement which was bound to come in one way or another. Jesus is not the founder of Christianity but he has been adopted by Christians as their Christ; he became the Christ in whom his followers saw all the prophecies fulfilled, while the emperors on the throne, the successors of ,

¹⁵ *Buddhism in Translations*, p. 45.

Augustus, the Cæsars in Rome, had sorely disappointed the people's hopes and expectations.

Christianity, or a religion such as Christianity, would have originated even if Jesus had never existed, and also if this growing faith of a god-man that would be worshiped as the Saviour of mankind had been linked to some other personality than Jesus; to the mythical person of Mithras; to some Brahman Avatar like Krishna; to the sage of India, Buddha; or Apollonius of Tyana, the representative of an idealized paganism.

It would have made a difference in many details if another than Jesus had been chosen as the Christ. In place of a retrospect upon Judaism with its Hebrew literature as the mother of Christianity we would look upon some other sacred canon, perhaps upon the Gathas of the Avesta; but in all essentials, in doctrine as well as in moral ideals, we would have had the same religion. Probably, too, we would have passed through

the same aberrations: a dualistic interpretation of the soul, belief in supernaturalism and miracles, the establishment of a priestly hierarchy with its seat in Rome, the medieval struggle between the secular and the ecclesiastical powers, and even the horrors of the Inquisition and witch persecution. But the final result would have been the same. Science would at last have dispersed the fog of superstition and any other kind of Christianity would also have liberated itself from the shackles of dogmatism. All accidentals are transient, but the ideal so far as it is founded on truth is eternal.

In the struggle for existence that took place during the first, second and third centuries of our era, Christianity conquered and left Jesus alone in the field as the only one that deserved the name Saviour. He was human, perfectly human; he had assumed a definite personality, and his death on the cross had endeared him to the large masses of mankind, the many millions of the poor,

the suffering, the disinherited. The figure of Mithras was too hazy, too mythological, and the personality of Apollonius too much associated with pagan beliefs. They gained a temporary ascendancy but were placed in the balance and found wanting.

Virgil's Fourth Eclogue has done its part to prepare the way for a recognition of Jesus as the Saviour of the world, as the God-man, or as the Christians called him, the Christ.

The very existence of Virgil's Eclogue antedates the Christian era and thereby proves the pre-Christian existence of the saviour ideal. Historians recognize more and more that this ideal prevalent throughout the Roman empire in those days, has helped to make Christianity and has also influenced the spirit in which the story of Jesus was written in the Gospels.

* * *

We have prepared a translation in the meter of the original so as to give approximately the same impression that

the Latin verses must have made on the Roman reader in Virgil's time. The heroic hexameter, which is the meter in which Virgil's poem is written, appears ponderous to English eyes because the line is long. And so we have decided merely for reasons of convenience to break the lines at their main caesuras.

INVOCATION.

(Addressed to the consul Pollio.)

O ye Sicilian Muses,
let higher our strains be and grander.
Tamarisks do not please all,
nor a song of the vineyards, the lowly.
Take we our theme from the woods,
let the woods of the consul be worthy.

Sicelides Musæ,
paulo maiora canamus!
Non omnes arbusta iuvant,
humilesque myricæ;
Si canimus silvas,
silvæ sint consule dignæ.

A NEW ERA.

Now comes the era described
in the verse of the Sybil of Cumae,
From the beginning is started again
the great order of ages,
Now does the virgin return,
the Saturnian Kingdom appeareth;
Now from the heavens on high
is descending a new generation.

Ultima Cumæi
venit iam carminis ætas;
Magnus ab integro
sæclorum nascitur ordo.
Iam redit et Virgo,
redeunt Saturnia regna:
Iam nova progenies
cælo demittitur alto.

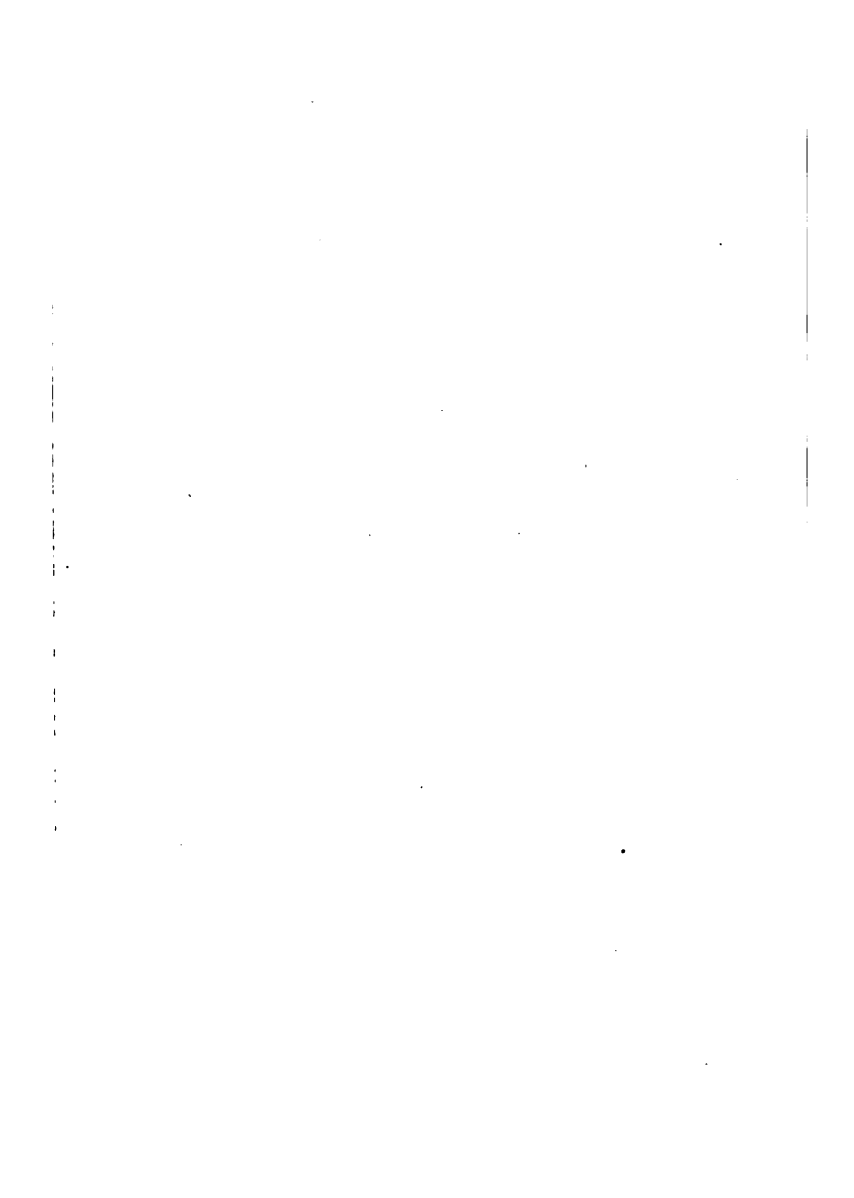
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FOREORDAINED.



**"Thus," spake in concert the Fates
addressing their spindles, according
To the eternal decree of the gods:
"Run on, oh ye ages!"**

**Talia sæcla suis
dixerunt, currite, fusis
Concordes stabili
fatorum numine Parcæ.**



DIVINITIES OF LIGHT.

Bless him, the infant with whom
discontinues the era of iron;
Bless him with whom will arise
the new race that is gloriously golden,
Bless, chaste Lucina, the boy;
now reigneth thy brother Apollo.

**Tu modo nascenti
 puero, quo ferrea primum
Desinet, ac toto
 surget gens aurea mundo,
Casta, fave, Lucina:
 tuus iam regnat Apollo.**

THE CONSUL.

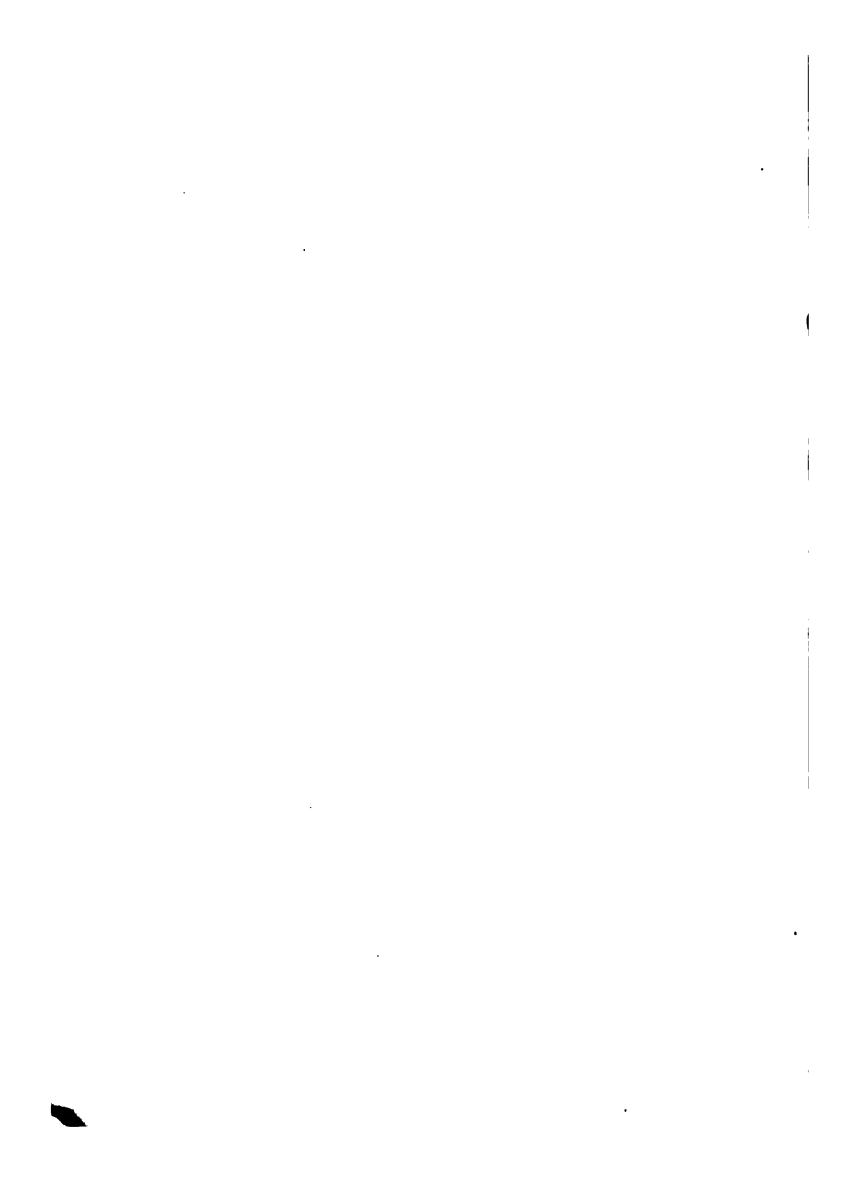
Now is beginning this wonderful age
while thou rulest as consul.
Pollio, under thy sway,
in thy year, the great months are proceeding.
Thou art the leader, and traces of crime
that are not yet abolished
Will be forever removed,
and the earth will be free from its terror.

Teque adeo decus
hoc ævi, te consule, inibit,
Pollio: et incipient
magni procedere menses:
Te duce, si qua manent
sceleris vestigia nostri,
Irrita p̄p̄etua
solvent formidine tērras.

FLOWERS ROUND THE CRADLE.

First will the earth without culture,
 dear boy, bring thee gifts for thy
 childhood,
Vines of green ivy, and ladygloves
 lovely with wonderful fragrance;
Mixed with the cheerful acanthus
 will grow Colocasian lilies.

At tibi prima, puer,
 nullo munuscula cultu,
Errantes hederas
 passim cum baccare tellus,
Mixtaque ridenti
 colocasia fundet acantho.



**LIFE AND THE FULNESS
THEREOF.**

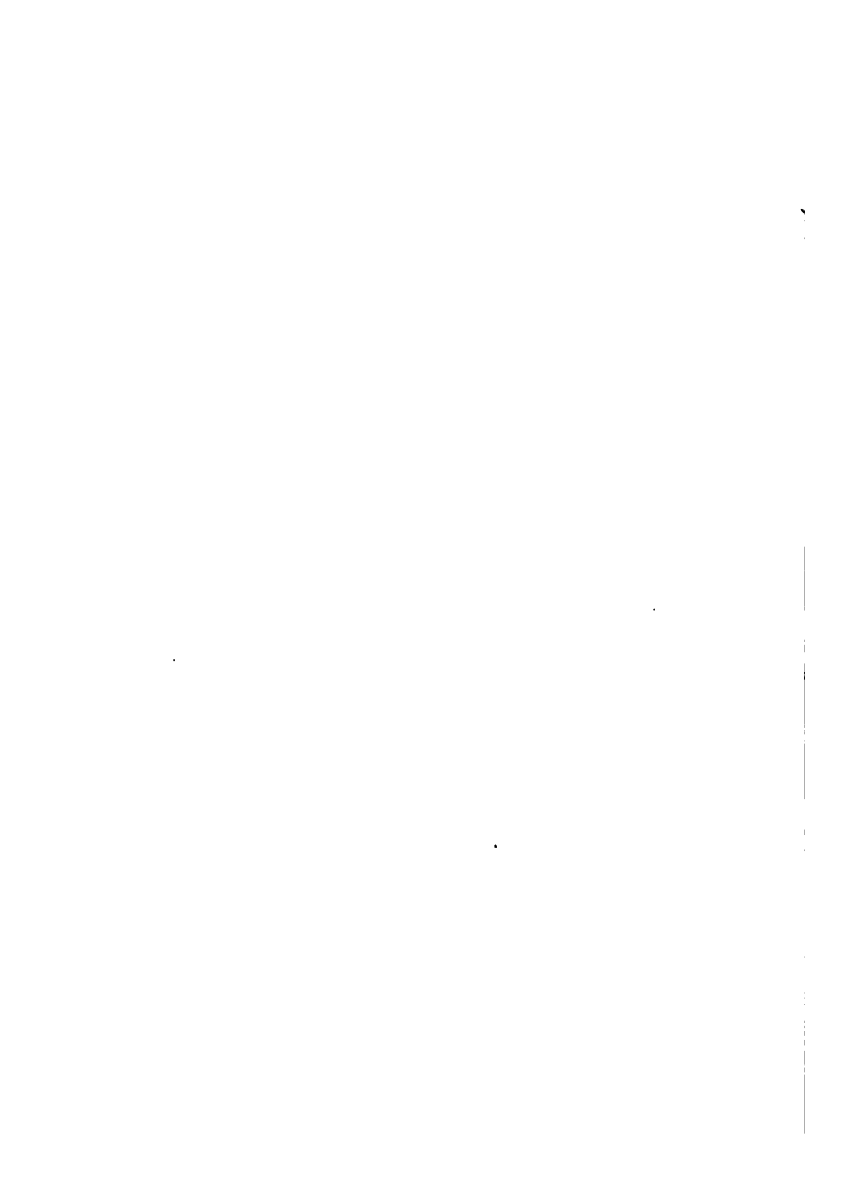
Yea, at the cradle for thee,
there shall blossom the sweetest of
flowers;
Goats will return by themselves
to our homesteads with udders dis-
tended,
Nor any longer our cattle
shall fear huge terrible lions.
Then will the serpent die out,
and the herbs disappear that bear poi-
son,
While the Assyrian spikenard
will thrive in most bountiful plenty.

Ipsa tibi blandos
fundent cunabula flores:
Ipsæ lacte domum
referent distenta capellæ
Ubera, nec magnos
metuent armenta leones.
Occidet et serpens,
et fallax herba veneni
Occidet: Assyrium
vulgo nascetur amomum.

GROWING TO MATURITY.

But when the age thou attainest
to read of the deeds of thy fathers,
And of the heroes, and when thou
beginnest to know what is virtue,
Then will the ripening ears of the fields
by and by turn to yellow.
Then will be found the luxurious grape
upon briars and brambles,
And the hard oaks will be dripping
with honey, like dew in the morning.

At simul heroum
laudes, et facta parentis
Iam legere, et quæ sit
poteris cognoscere virtus:
Molli paulatim
flavescet campus arista,
Incultisque rubens
pendebit sentibus uva,
Et duræ quercus
sudabunt roscida mella.



AMONG THE IMMORTALS.

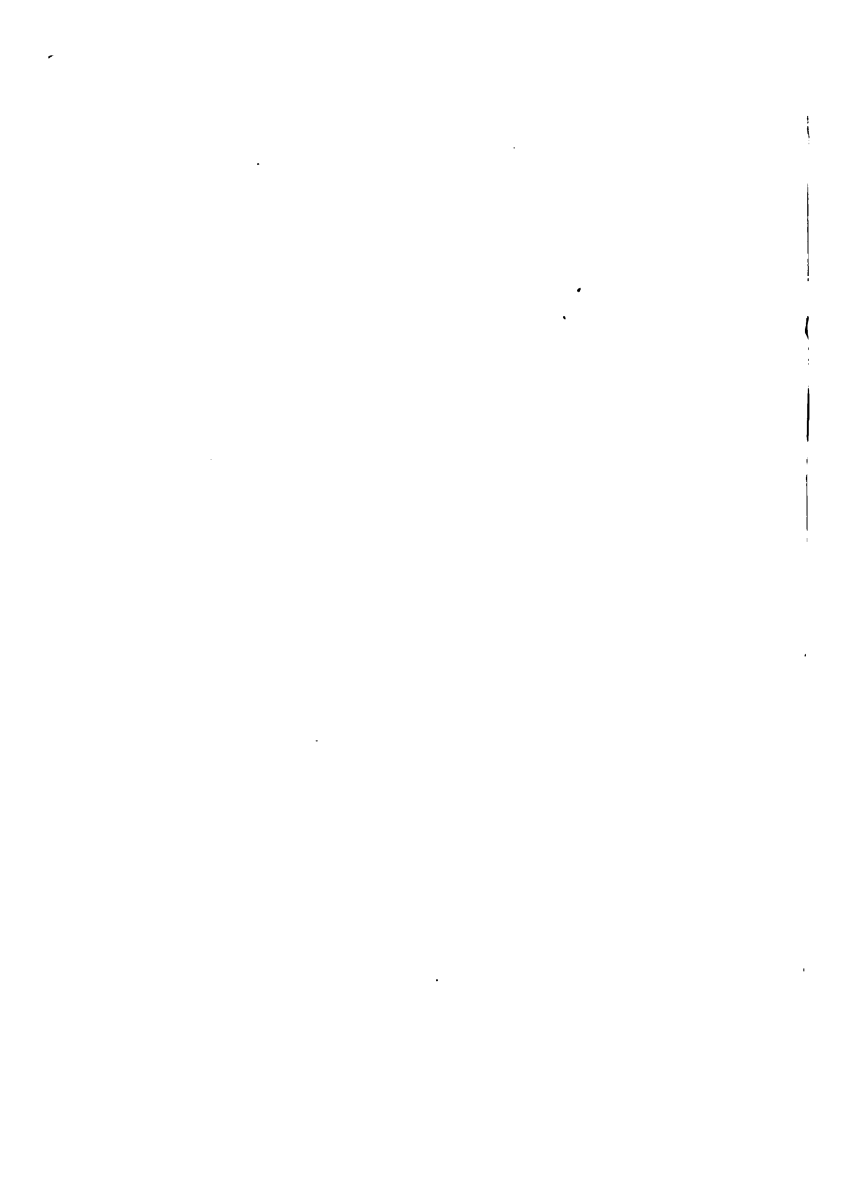
But that boy will partake of the life of
the gods,
he will meet them,
Meet all the heroes; and he
will in turn by the gods be beholden.
Over a pacified world will he rule
patriarchic in virtue.

Ille deum vitam accipiet,
divisque videbit
Permixtos heroas,
et ipse videbitur illis:
Pacatumque reget
patriis virtutibus orbem.

DEEDS OF VALOR.

Yet some traces remain
 of the ancient insidious vices
Which will induce bold sailors
 the ocean to dare. It will prompt us
Walls round the cities to build
 and to cleave our acres with furrows.
Then will another ship Argo,
 well steered by a helmsman like Ti-
 phys,
Carry new heroes to Colchis
 and other great wars are expected.
Then against Troy will be sent
 for a second time mighty Achilles.

Pauca tamen suberunt
 priscae vestigia fraudis,
Quae tentare Thetim
 ratibus, quae cingere muris
Oppida, quae iubeant
 telluri infindere sulcos.
Alter erit tum Tiphys,
 et altera quae vehat Argo
Delectos heroas:
 erunt etiam altera bella,
Atque iterum ad Trojam
 magnus mittetur Achilles.



NO TRADING.

Afterwards when thine own age
has endowed thee with vigorous man-
hood,
Sailors no longer will sail on the sea,
for no ships will be needed
For an exchange of our goods.
All produce will grow in each country.

**Hinc, ubi iam firmata virum
te fecerit ætas,
Cedet et ipse mari vector,
nec nautica pinus
Mutabit merces:
omnis feret omnia tellus.**

NO LABORING.

Neither the soil will be tilled with the
hoe,
nor the grape vine need pruning;
Even the bullocks will stray
from the plow set free by the farmer.
Wool will no longer be dyed
to exhibit the various colors,
For in the meadows the ram will
himself grow a fleece that is sometimes
Reddish like purple and sometimes
will turn into yellow like saffron.
Lambs when they feed, of themselves
will be dized in hues that are scarlet.

Non rastros patietur humus,
non vinea falcem;
Robustus quoque iam
tauris iuga solvet arator.
Nec varios discet
mentiri lana colores:
Ipse sed in pratis
aries iam suave rubenti
Murice, iam croceo
mutabit vellera luto:
Sponte sua sandyx
pascentes vestiet agnos.

SON OF ZEUS.

Deign to accept,—for the time is fulfilled,—
the illustrious honors,
Thou, O loved offspring of gods,
O son of great Jove, the Almighty.

**Aggredere, o, magnos,
aderit iam tempus, honores,
Clara deum soboles,
magnum Iovis incrementum!**



THE WORLD'S DESIRE.

See how the world toward thee
 with its ponderous mass is inclining.
See all the countries, the tracts of the
 sea,
 and the depth of the heaven,
See how they hail the arrival,
 they all, of the age that is coming.

**Aspice convexo
nutantem pondere mundum,
Terrasque, tractusque maris,
cælumque profundum:
Aspice, venturo
lætentur ut omnia sæclo.**

THE POET'S PRAYER.

Oh that my life for the future
would last but sufficiently longer,
Also my spirit, that I thy glory
might praise in my verses;

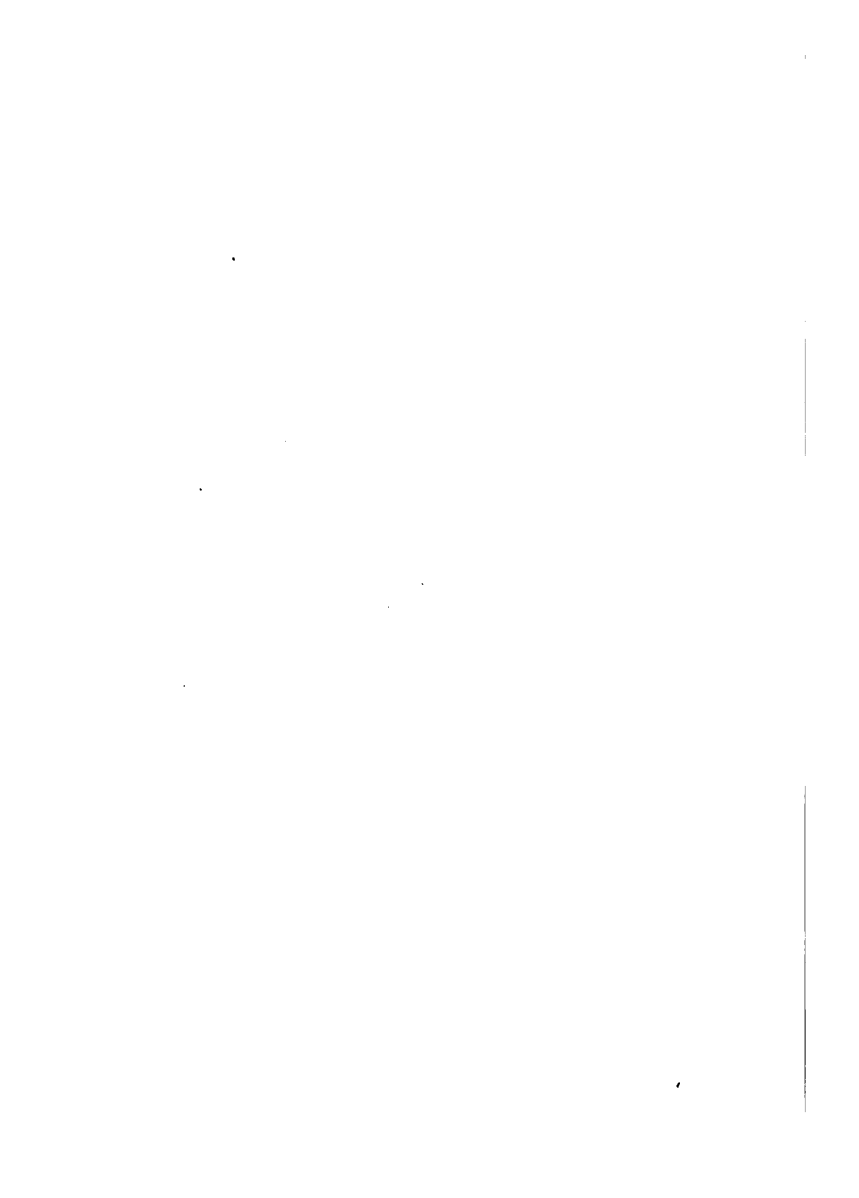
**O mihi tam longæ
 maneat pars ultima vitæ,
Spiritus et quantum
 sat erit tua dicere facta!**



THE POET'S BOAST.

Neither should Orpheus the Thracian,
nor Linus excel me in singing,
E'en though the former were helped
by his mother, the last by his father,
Son of Calliope, Orpheus,
and Linus, the son of Apollo,
Even if Pan would contest
and Arcadians acted as umpires!
Even God Pan (may Arcadians judge!)
will confess to be beaten.

Non me carminibus
vincat, nec Thracius Orpheus,
Nec Linus: huic mater
quamvis, atque huic pater adsit.
Orphei Calliopea, Lino
formosus Apollo.
Pan etiam Arcadia
mecum si iudice certet,
Pan etiam Arcadia
dicat se iudice victum.



ON HIS MOTHER'S ARM.

Show, little boy, by thy smile
that already thou knowest thy mother
Who for thy sake hath endured
ten months of solicitous trouble.
Smile, little infant! on Thee
have not yet been smiling thy parents,
Nor hast thou dined with the gods,
nor been wedded as yet to a goddess.

**Incipe, parve puer,
 risu cognoscere matrem:
Matri longa decem
 tulerunt fastidia menses.
Incipe, parve puer,
 cui non risere parentes,
Nec deus hunc mensa,
 dea nec dignata cubili est.**

